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Remarks—General

Complying with 37 CFR 1.121

The Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment advises that all claims of this amendment should have the status of “NEW”, and that none should have any amendment markings. All changes have now been made to bring this amendment into compliance.

Complying with Examiner’s objections to Claim 92, lines 21-4.

These lines have been completely removed to eliminate any suggestion of method limitations, and also to provide the missing standard for newly modest comparisons. Thus the new purpose of the whereby clause is simply to draw attention to important advantages of the claimed apparatus.

Complying with Examiner’s objections to Claim 100, lines 9-11.

The ferris-wheel analogy has been eliminated, and a new description of the basket’s leveling action by turning upon its quick-release support pins is now intended for improved clarity.

Overcoming the Combination of Seydel, Raichlen and Wu.

We respectfully submit that a major component of applicant’s specification—namely, the quick-acting lock—is not only entirely absent

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from the three-way combination, but also that no reading of the mechanical descriptions of the three can be reasonably stretched to suggest such a lock.

In support of this submission, we must first eliminate any reference to Wu (US 5,201,540) because he teaches no lock at all. He relies upon gravity to hold the burden carried by his cart. Thus we need examine only a two-way combination, Seydel (US 5,160,154) with Raichlen (US 6,540,242), to see if a quick-acting lock would be obvious from their teaching.

Applicant's Lock Speed Specification

Examiner asserts that applicant has provided no standard for speed of operation of his lock. It is true that applicant has not specified a precise span of milliseconds to be clocked as go or no-go. However, if patent definitions of mechanical devices are to rely on generally-accepted standards of the meaning of language, then it should be obvious to anyone that a huge gulf separates applicant's "quick" from Raichlen's slow, ponderous, laborious chain of several interdependent and successive actions by a string of Rube Goldberg adjustable devices which ultimately obtain enough interconnections to achieve locking of burden to cart. That gulf makes it clear that A) applicant has in fact specified a standard—quick-attach and quick-detach—for speed of operation of his lock, and B) it would be impossible for Seydel's slow sequence of events to approach anywhere near to applicant's standard.

Applicant has further specified the direct simplicity, and resulting quickness, of his lock by describing the lock's action, in drawings and text,

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as sliding a short distance straight down the cart's spine to lock, and reversing that short slide to unlock.

For a quick-acting lock, or some portion thereof that might be close enough to applicant's specification to open the possibility of obviousness in combination with Raichlen, we must therefore look to Seydel to carry most of the necessary teaching burden. But where is Seydel's lock?

Applicant has not specified merely any generic lock. Instead he has specified a particular kind: quick-attach and quick-detach locks, quick-acting. That is, a lock capable, in and of itself, of particular actions, to accomplish locking and unlocking of items needing to be locked or unlocked. Thus the commonly-accepted meaning of applicant's specification, quick-attach and quick-detach lock, we submit, would have to be a discrete mechanical device, interposed between or upon items to be locked, and that the device have at least one moving part capable of taking the necessary action, namely attaching or detaching.

What Seydel teaches about locks

Seydel teaches no device with any moving part, hence no lock capable of action of any sort, hence no quick-acting lock. What he teaches is simply the wedging of a container between an immovable upper cart fixture and an immovable lower cart fixture.

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The combination of Raichlen and Seydel is thus the combination of a reference to an extremely slow-acting chain of partial-locking devices with a reference to no lock at all. Such a combination could not possibly suggest or make obvious its opposite, a quick-acting lock as defined by applicant's specification.

Overcoming the Combination of Two Wilson Embodiments

Examiner concedes that Wilson fails to teach the quick-release pin mounts specified as supporting applicant's baskets. Examiner then states that a Wilson embodiment has a pivot (106) engaging a recess (110) on a bin, and that it teaches a quick connect/release feature. He proposes using that feature in combination with another embodiment, Figs. 1-3, to achieve an obvious suggestion of the quick-acting support pins specified by applicant.

We respectfully submit that all of Wilson's embodiments differ so greatly from applicant's that no obvious connection can be seen. First, pivot (106) does not engage the bin, as stated by Examiner and as specified for applicant's direct-support pins. All Wilson's pivots engage recesses in a bracket, sleeve or sling, which in turn support his bin. Second, most of Wilson's pivots are permanently attached to those intermediate components. His pivot/aperture assemblies mostly do not release or re-attach at all, whether quickly or slowly. Third, his releasable brackets and sleeves would have to be awkwardly combined with a lift of both themselves together with the bins they support, hardly a quick-acting procedure. To avoid that awkwardness, we believe, most users would simply lift bin from bracket,

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leaving bracket with cart like those permanently attached in Figs. 1-3.
Fourth, using Examiner's proposed embodiment of Figs. 4-6 with the frame and bin arrangement of Figs. 1-3 would be a non sequitur, because pivot connections in the latter are permanent and those of the former removable.

Thus Wilson's pivot pins have no obvious relationship to applicant's quick-release pins, because Wilson's connect different entities and most do not either release or reattach those entities. Wilson's pins and apertures, rather than connecting and releasing between basket and cart frame as applicant's do, instead connect cantilever arms extending forward from the cart frame to brackets, sleeves or slings, which in turn support his bins.

Conditional Request for Constructive Assistance

Applicant has amended the claims of this application so that they are proper, definite, and define novel structure which is also unobvious. Therefore applicant now solicits reconsideration and allowance.

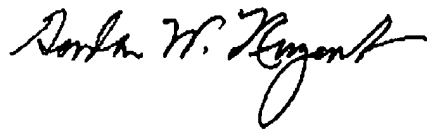
If, for any reason, this application is not believed to be in full condition for allowance, applicant respectfully reminds Examiner that he has been and is again invited to write an acceptable claim in order to further illuminate for applicant the necessary approach to achieving allowable condition.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gordon W. Nugent". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gordon" and last name "Nugent" clearly distinguishable.